

Message Text

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IN AN EDITORIAL ASSESSING PRESIDENT FORD'S TRIP TO EUROPEA, THE BULLETIN (CONSERVATIVE) OF JUNE 6 (EVENING), UNDER HEADING "A WISER MAN/ COMMENTS:

"THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE MAY HAVE PASSED THROUGH SEVERAL MONTHS OF SORROW AND DISTRESS; THE DANGEROUS SQUABBLES BETWEEN ITS MEMBERS, AND THE RISK OF A NATIONALISM THAT, ON ITS OWN CHALLENGED SOME OF THE INDISPUTABLE RIGHTS OF THE ALLIANCE GAVE REASONS FOR TWO MUCH CONCERN. WHILST THE MOST POWERFUL MEMBER WAS BEING PILLORIED IN VIETNAM, CRITICS ABOUNDED. THERE WERE THOSE WHO THOUGHT THAT THE VIETNAM WAR COULD HAVE BEEN FINISHED EARLY IN FAVOUR OF THE SOUTH, HAD THERE BEEN MORE DETERMINATION. AND (WHEN) THE WITHDRAWAL WAS COMPLETED, DEGENERATING INTO A COMPLETE ROUT BY THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, THE BITTEREST PILL HAD TO BE TASTED BY UNITED STATES' ALLIES, EVEN IF THEY WERE FAR FROM THE ACTUAL SCENE OF BATTLE.

SOMETHING HAD TO BE DONE TO LIFT THE LOW EBB OF UNITED STATES REPUTE. PRESIDENT FORD, A NEWCOMER TO THE INTERNATIONAL ARNEA, WHO HAD BEEN HANDICAPPED BY CONGRESS AND OTHERS, DID MUCH TO ALLAY FEAR, AND TO RAISE HOPES THAT THE MIGHT OF THE UNITED STATES IS NOT LIKELY TO BE TAMPERED WITH AGAIN. AFTER HIS MEETINGS IN BRUSSELS, ROME, SPAIN, AND SALZBURG, PRESIDENT FORD CAN NOW SURVEY

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WHAT HE HAS ACCOMPLISHED, AND WHAT IS SURE, HOW CONGRESS VIEWS HIS

RECORD OVERSEAS. THE SENATE HAS ALREADY REJECTED AN ATTEMPT BY THE SO CALLED LIBERAL DEMOCRATS TO IMPOSE A CEILING ON NEW WEAPONS EXPENDITURE...THE MAIN ISSUE IS TO HAVE THE UNITED STATES INDEPENDENT OF ANY OTHER FOR ITS ENERGY NEEDS. IT WILL BE A CRUCIAL BATTLE WITH CONGRESS, BUT IN THE PRESENT MOOD, CONGRESS IS LIKELY TO BE MORE UNDERSTANDING AND MORE AMENABLE.

PRESIDENT FORD MUST HAVE LEARNED DURING HIS EUROPEAN TRIP THAT EUROPE AND THE FREE WORLD WATCH THE UNITED STATES WITH A GREATER ATTENTION THAN THE AMERICANS THEMSELVES REALISE, AND THIS, IT MUST BE SAID, IS A SERIOUS REFLECTION ON THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES IN EUROPE WHO DO NOT CONVEY TO WASHINGTON WHAT IS THOUGHT AND FELT ABOUT THE UNITED STATES, THAT FACTS COUNT MORE THAN ASSURANCES.

PRESIDENT FORD HAS RETURNED TO WASHINGTON A WISER MAN, AND IN HIS ADDRESS TO WEST POINT CADETS HE INSISTED THAT "IT DID STILL SERVE A PURPOSE, TO REMIND OURSELVES, OUR FRIENDS, AND OUR POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES THAT AMERICANS ARE STILL PREPARED TO PAY THE PRICE OF FREEDOM - THAT WE WILL HONOUR OUR COMMITMENTS, THAT WE WILL DO OUR DUTY". THAT, ONE FEELS, IS WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED, CLEAR, UNEQUIVOCAL AND TO THE POINT.BIRN

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